

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

c/o Mrs. Kennedy,
Leave Green, Keston,
November 28th, 1915.

DEAR EDITOR,

I think some of the readers of L'UMILE PIANTA might be interested to know of a most delightful book which I have come across, and which is a great help to us in making up our Century Books. It is *A Handbook of Pictorial History*, by H. W. Donald, and contains "680 illustrations from original and contemporary sources treating upon architecture, arms and armour, antiquities, costumes, customs, shipping, heraldry, the Church, etc., with notes and descriptive articles on these subjects for the use of students and teachers." It may be had from Charles and Son, 10, Paternoster Square, for 3s. 11d. net, post free, or 3s. 6d. net without postage.

Charles and Son also have the *Suggestions Historical Illustrations*, by H. W. Donald, in four sets. A set contains 24 cards of illustrations. Price per set 1s. 6d., but as teachers get them at 25 per cent. discount, one set, post free, costs 1s. 4d.—Yours etc.,

BLANCHE S. MOFFATT.

11, Westbourne Square, W.
January 11th, 1916.

DEAR EDITOR,

I wonder if any students living in London would help in the work of the Women Patrols?

Many women want something to do for the Country just now; this is one way. The National Union of Women Workers has been authorized by the Home Office and the Chief Commissioner of Police for London to appoint Women

Patrols, with a view to influencing and restraining the girls who congregate in the neighbourhood of all camps, recruiting offices, and railway stations. The *qualifications desirable* in a woman patrol are briefly: tact and sympathy, some previous experience of work among girls, good health, the ability to give not less than two consecutive hours a week to the work.

We are in need of more patrols, and also of more helpers in the clubs which are started in all districts where we work, for you will readily understand that it is useless to try to get girls away from danger unless we have something pleasant and interesting to offer in place of the unhealthy excitement of the streets.

I shall be glad to give further particulars to anyone who thinks of taking up the work. The address of the Hon. Secretary of the Movement is Mrs. Carden, Women's Patrol Committee, Parliament Mansions, Victoria Street, S.W.—Yours etc.,

DORA L. ESSLEMONT.

Baglio Woodhouse,
Marsala, Sicily, Italy,
December 15th, 1915.

DEAR EDITOR,

. . . Of course the life here is very strange to me after England, and it is of necessity very quiet and rather cramped. I am alone all day, as my husband goes off to his work soon after 8 a.m. and does not get back until 4.30 at the earliest. During this time I am practically tied to the house, as it is unsafe for girls to go for walks alone here, except just a very little way into the town, as far as the Post Office. There are four other English women in the colony besides myself, but as they all live down the other side of the town and we are outside in the so-called

"country," I do not see much of them. At present I find the language a great difficulty; it is not nearly as like Italian as I imagined, and as there is no such thing as grammar, it is rather difficult to make a start. Sicilians, at any rate in this part of the island, are not interesting. Somehow the civilization of the people seems to have come to a standstill at a certain point and it does not appear that it will ever develop any further.

We have a very beautiful view from the terrace at the front of this house—right out over the sea and the islands, the nearest of which, Lavenzo, is about twenty miles away, and to the north of us lies Trapani and Monte St. Giuliano in the background. I have not been up the Monte yet, but it looks very beautiful from here and we can see the town at the top and the grand old fortress built on the edge of the rocks quite clearly. About six miles from here there is a beautiful place called Racalia, where there are orange and lemon groves. We went out there for a picnic soon after I came here, and I was so delighted to see oranges and lemons growing—they look so pretty in the sunlight, and I'm sure the oranges tasted far better than any I had ever had in England!

One day, about a fortnight ago, we were walking along by the seashore when I noticed a trailing plant with yellow flowers, rather like a vegetable marrow in growth and flower, though not so large. The leaves and stem were very hairy and the fruit was a hairy sort of pod, bright green, rather like an unopened Oriental poppy bud in shape and size. I happened to touch one of these fruits with the stick I was carrying, and it shot forth a stream of liquid with such force that it made quite a little noise on the stone wall behind us which was about four feet away, and the liquid reached it at a height of nearly six feet from the ground. We noticed that only the ripe fruit burst in this way, as several we touched did not operate! I don't know at all

what the plant is, but I think it must belong to the marrow tribe. Nobody seems to take any interest in wild flowers here, and the servants think me very extraordinary when I bring in wild flowers to the house. Wild iris are beautiful just now; they grow on a wild sort of common place near here. They are only at the most six or seven inches high, but the flowers are quite as large as the Spanish iris, and of a most glorious blue. They remind me very much of the Spanish iris I think, and the leaves are more like the grass of wild hyacinths than anything else. I am hoping to keep up my Nature Note-book here, but so far I have not had time to do any painting.

We are having very wet weather just now, and it is hard to realize that it is December. Of course the most trying point about the climate is the fact that we so constantly suffer from siroccos. I could not have believed that a wind could make one feel so utterly tired and *sans* energy; but sirocco is a most deadly wind, and lucky is he who can withstand it satisfactorily! Last week we had incessant sirocco; this week the rain has come instead, and it is cold, though not nice frosty cold. We never have that here, sad to say.—Yours etc,

EVELINE F. A. BANNERMAN.

3, Edmunds Place,
Shepherdess Walk, N.,
January 11th, 1916.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

Thank you very much for the money you sent. I really hardly expected any these bad times, so that it was more welcome than ever. On the whole Hoxton people are exceedingly prosperous just now. They nearly all have husbands or sons in the army and draw good allowances. Besides this, many of the women are out at work and the

girls and boys are earning about twice as much as they do in normal times. There are just a few who are not getting any more pay and therefore feel the pinch of poverty owing to the rise in the price of food. One of these is a very nice woman whose husband (the latter a German, by the way) deserted her some years ago, and she has managed to support herself and her two children ever since by going out to do laundry work. She earns 14s. a week, and as you may imagine that does not go far for three people with food at war prices. She is very proud and it is difficult to know how to help her, but I sent 10s. of your money round to her on Christmas Eve with the words "A Present from Father Christmas" on the outside. I have heard nothing more, but the elder little girl, aged twelve, was looking very happy and cheerful at Christmas, and as she had previously been wearing a terribly worried expression, I feel sure that you all, taking the form of Father Christmas, have made one family very happy. The remainder of the money was used to keep a consumptive boy of thirteen in the country. He has been there (Tunbridge Wells) for about two years, the parents paying part of the cost and the remainder being raised from various sources. He will be fourteen in February, and it is hoped that he will then support himself by country work. Thanking you all again,—Yours sincerely,

MABEL CONDER.

STUDENTS' LETTER.

Scale How, Ambleside,
December, 1915.

DEAR EX-STUDENTS,

The first event of importance since our last letter was the Hallow-e'en party, which we were obliged to have on October 30th, as the 31st fell on a Sunday. All the Seniors

were dressed in brightly-coloured dominoes, scarlet, yellow, and cerise, over gym. dresses, and wore black masks which completely disguised their faces. The Juniors were received at 7 o'clock with the usual wet sponges, brushes and brooms, and then danced until Miss Mason came in to see the Seniors' performance. The programme included three songs: "We are Thirty Students" (to the tune of "Riding down to Bangor"), "Dear Juniors all" ("John Peel"), which gave sage advice to the Juniors for when they are in their posts, and "Down in the Classroom" (Massa's in the cold ground"). Some of us acted two plays. The first was "The Magic Flower," and the principal character was a student who had been told by another student that a friend of hers, a great genius, was coming to Scale How from India. She then happened to rub the stalk of a magic flower and caused a genie to appear. Of course she mistook it for the genius, and the conversation that followed was very amusing. The genie produced three children to whom the poor student gave a "Crit." on the Ambleside Alphabet. The genie frightened the children away, claimed the flower, and was at last persuaded to vanish. The second play was, "First Impressions of Scale How." A conceited new student, Miss Wentworth de Vere, who had always done just as she pleased and been waited on hand and foot, was being brought up in the train by two seniors. They gave her a very exaggerated description of the work of the college and then she fell asleep and had a dreadful dream about her first day in which every detail that she had been told was repeated in the most confused way. "Crits.," handicrafts, monitress duties, unpacking, followed one after another, while a cruel bedroom monitress chased her and a horrible yellow slug a foot long appeared in every corner. When she awoke, the others reassured her, and she decided that it might not be so bad after all. The performance ended with a trio, "Long may she live, our College fair!"

Afterwards we had a sumptuous supper in St. George's and more dancing in the classroom.

The next great event was the visit of Professor Campagnac. He came on Thursday evening, and on Friday, November 5th, he heard us give our final "Crits." We shall always "remember the Fifth of November!" The rest of Friday and Saturday were occupied by lessons from the Staff and by the reading and languages examinations. In French we each narrated a part of Mademoiselle's lecture on Fénelon. In German we read, translated and narrated. In Latin and Italian we read and translated. Professor Campagnac also saw some of us do mazurka and reel steps and Indian clubs. On the Friday evening the Juniors acted "She Stoops to Conquer," which was very much appreciated by the audience. Professor Campagnac left us on Saturday evening.

The rest of the term passed quite uneventfully until the last week, which has been very full and busy, and also quite exciting.

The children's Musical Evening on Brahms took place on Tuesday, December 7th. Miss Parker arranged a delightful programme of songs and pieces. Nearly all the girls played piano solos and two of them played a violin duet. We also had a pianoforte duet by two of the students and two songs, "The Lullaby" and "The Gardener," by the whole singing class. The nicest thing was at the very end, when a picked choir of staff and students sang portions of the "Requiem." They sang in parts and it sounded beautiful, as they stood in the verandah outside the drawing-room.

On Thursday, December 9th, the school-children had their Christmas party. Their play began at about 3.30, and was a great success. It was "Christmas Past and Present," and consisted of several scenes from Dickens's "Christmas Carol." The acting was very good and so were the dresses. The babies looked perfectly charming when they appeared

as the quaint little guests at the Christmas party at the Fezziwigs, which the Ghost of Christmas Past showed to Scrooge.

After the play the children had tea and then came into the Classroom to watch the little performance which the students had prepared for them. The Seniors acted Nursery Rhymes in costume, including "Jack and Jill," "Humpty Dumpty," "Miss Muffett," etc. Then they all danced and sang, "Here we go to the Practising School," and clapped their hands for joy! The Old Woman who lived in a Shoe next produced presents out of an enormous paper shoe and made the Nursery Rhymes fetch the children in turn to receive their Christmas books. Then followed a little dancing and games before the children went away.

The end of term dance took place on Saturday, December 11th, and we all enjoyed it immensely. We had a stand-up supper this year and I think most of us agreed that it was quite as much fun as a sit-down one. We were all in fancy dress, which added to the enjoyment, though most of the dresses were only more or less impromptu.

We have had four drawing-room evenings from Mr. Rawnsley on "In Memoriam." The only ordinary evenings that we have been able to have since our last letter were: "Charles Kingsley," by Miss Jameson, "Bret Harte," by Miss Hickson, and "Four Influential Operatic Composers," by Miss Wimbush.

We have not had many Scouting Afternoons this term, but a good deal of Tassel-work has been done. We are all very proud because Peewit 100, our scout-leader and J.M. (Miss Hickson), has gained the White Tip.

We have had very little hockey, owing to the snowy weather. We had such hard frosts in the middle of November that we were able to have skating on Lily Tarn and even two or three days on Rydal.

The last three days of the term have been taken up with

the education examinations. All the seniors except the Easter Eggs have got posts in view and nearly all have made definite arrangements.

With best wishes to all of you for a happy New Year, we remain, yours sincerely,

THE PRESENT STUDENTS.

THE ASSAULT ON HILL 70.

SEPTEMBER 25TH, 1915.

(Reprinted by kind permission from "*The Scotsman*" of November 16th).

N B.—Captain Y.= Captain Stanley Pringle.

The objective at the point we are considering was Cité St. Auguste on the lower ground beyond "Hill 70." The first line of enemy trenches was about 300 yards from our own; away up the slope the second great German line of defence ran over the crest of "Hill 70," with a redoubt projecting.

The morning of Saturday, the 25th of September, found the Brigade eagerly awaiting the order to attack. All fires were to be out by 2.30 a.m., so the men had their breakfast before that—cocoa, biscuit and bully-beef. In the words of an officer, "the men were frightfully keen for the fight." Later in the morning, about 10 o'clock, it began to drizzle, and it rained heavily in the afternoon, but when they started all were dry, though there was a slight mist. The country round about was very open and level, with little coal pits here and there, and a village round each. Immediately in front of the Brigade the ground was grassy. The rain of the previous night and the day before had wet the grass, but it was not too long, and made fairly good going. The rain, however, had been adverse to the success of the British gas.

Four days' bombardment had left practically no wire in

front of the German trenches. All was eager expectation, but the attack timed for 5 a.m. was put off for an hour and a half in hope of the wind changing to a direction more favourable for our gas. The wind did not change, but after an intense bombardment, which started at 5.30, and was accompanied by alternations of gas and smoke, at last at 6.30 the expert telephoned down that it was now right, and that the attack should begin.

There had been great keenness among his officers for the honour of leading the attack, so the Colonel of the Cameronians had drawn lots, and these falling, curiously enough, in the actual order of seniority, Major X. and Captain Y. now headed the assault, the officers carrying revolvers and knuckle-duster daggers, and, for the most part, four or five bombs each.

They advanced over the parapet at a walk, so that all should start in good order. Major X. was killed very early in the advance, and after going about 200 yards Captain Y. was hit, but advanced steadily toward the first enemy trench. Lieutenant Z., who was dropped by a bullet just then—being subsequently decorated for his gallantry throughout the day—saw Captain Y. being hit, and from the position in which he himself fell could not see him after that, but he heard the Captain shouting to his men to charge, and, as other eye-witnesses inform us, led by the gallant Captain, the line swept on and through the first German trenches, rushing, yelling, and stabbing with bayonet and dagger, and on and up the lead-swept slope, wave upon wave of supporting lines following hard upon their heels amid an incessant patter of rifle and machine-gun bullets fired at long range; while their comrades to whom the task was assigned cleared out the German trenches in their rear, and brought the prisoners back into the British lines.

Meanwhile, with an irresistible dash and daring, the leading line swept on and up the long slope like the first

breaker of a rising tide upon a shelving beach. On and up they swept, Captain Y., though now hit four times or five, still leading and cheering on his men—on and up, and with a final rush and roar over the crest of the hill into the German trenches and through to the ground beyond. There at last, his task accomplished, Captain Y. fell, and to this day is missing. There beyond the crest the supporting lines rallied to their comrades. The Colonel had been put out of action at the first German trench, many officers and men had fallen in the great assault, but the hill had been won as ordered, and there the remains of the attacking force hung grimly on through the sodden afternoon till on the enforced retirement of a neighbouring battalion and the failure of reinforcements to arrive in time they withdrew reluctantly to the lower line of trenches.

THE LATE CAPTAIN A. S. PRINGLE, EDINBURGH.

(Reprinted by kind permission from "The Scotsman" of November 16th.)

Captain A. S. Pringle, who was the only son of Mr. J. C. Pringle, W.S., Edinburgh, was 37 years of age. He received his school education at Edinburgh Academy, where he distinguished himself, and particularly in mathematics. But he was no less distinguished in the athletic field, and for many years, at first in the school pack, and, later in the forward division of the Academicals, the shock head and beautifully strong and well-knit figure of "Touzie" (for so he was affectionately known) was familiar to all followers of Rugby football. From school he went to Trinity College, Cambridge, as an Academical Exhibitioner. He played against Oxford at Rugby in 1898. He graduated there in Arts, and then turning from pure science to Law, took the degree of Bachelor of Laws, first at Cambridge and then at

Edinburgh University. He was admitted to the Scottish Bar in 1902.

The comparative inactivity of an advocate's earlier career did not satisfy Pringle, and he threw himself into politics with characteristic energy and thoroughness. He unsuccessfully contested North-West Lanarkshire in the Unionist interest, and was afterwards invited and went to London to undertake literary duties at the head Unionist offices.

In soldiering, Pringle was always keenly interested. He was commissioned in the old University Company of the Queen's Edinburgh, and subsequently joined the Forth Division Engineers. On the discontinuance of the submarine mining branch of this service, he returned to the Queen's Edinburgh as Captain of the O.T.C. It was no surprise to his friends that immediately on the outbreak of war, sacrificing all personal interests, he joined the fighting forces of the Crown.

How well he performed his duty as a soldier his brother officers tell, and in the Loos engagement he faced and met his end with the fearless courage, determination, and high resolve which made him what he was.

He is survived by his wife and three young children. All honour to him and his like, a kind, big-hearted gallant man, made of stuff that men are made of.

LOVE AND LIFE—AN EXPLANATION.

In a previous article, which has apparently been misunderstood, I endeavoured to state that it was for parents alone to give any knowledge of the facts of life or the ritual of love. But one of the main objects of our union is that parents and teachers should work together and on a common plan. Now where the average teacher fails and the Amble-side trained teacher often succeeds is in just the treatment